

# HORMONES

## WHAT are hormones?

**Hormones** are chemical substances produced in the body to control the activity of certain cells or organs. They are essential for every activity of life: metabolism, growth, reproduction and mood control.

**ALL** animals **AND** plants have hormones naturally occurring in their systems. Hormones can also be produced synthetically in a laboratory.

## NO FOOD IS HORMONE FREE!

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) that controls food labelling does not permit labelling food as “hormone-free” because such a label is untruthful.<sup>1</sup> Naturally occurring hormones are present in plants (including grains, vegetables and fruit) and meat, poultry and fish products.

## ARE HORMONES USED FOR ALL FARM ANIMALS?



**No.** In Canada, growth hormones are approved for use **ONLY** with beef cattle (cattle raised for meat products).<sup>2</sup>



Hormones are not given to dairy cows (cows raised to produce milk). Dairy cows produce high quality milk when they are kept stress free and comfortable.



Pigs, chickens and turkeys also do not need hormones. No chickens anywhere in the world are given hormones.

## FARMERS USE HORMONES FOR A REASON

For beef cattle, added hormones assist their natural hormones by promoting growth of muscle rather than fat.

As a result, beef cattle who are given hormones grow more quickly, make more efficient use of their feed and produce leaner meat, all of which translate into lower costs for farmers, and less impact on the environment **AND** your grocery bill.



Between 1977 and 2007, use of hormones in cattle resulted in producing 11% more beef from 20% fewer cattle!<sup>3</sup>



# HORMONES

## Hormone use in beef cattle is safe



The *Food and Drugs Act* in Canada<sup>4</sup> states that hormones given to beef cattle must fulfill the following requirements:

- Be effective (do what they are supposed to do)
- Result in food products that are safe for people to eat on a regular basis
- Be safe for animals

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) randomly samples beef products in order to ensure that hormone levels are at or below the amount that is determined to be safe.



## THERE ARE NO SCIENTIFIC STUDIES

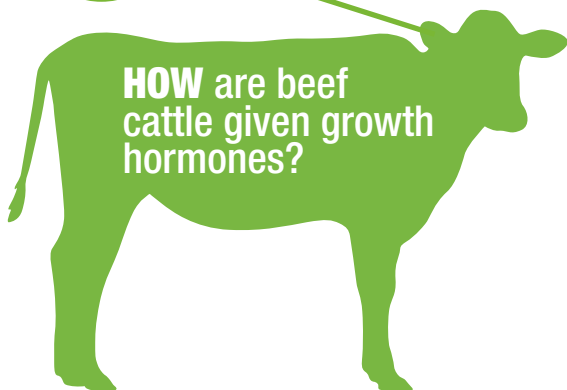
that indicate eating beef produced with hormones has any negative effects on human health.<sup>5</sup>

A small pellet containing the hormone is placed under the skin in an animal's ear. This pellet dissolves slowly over several months.



Cattle typically receive one or two hormone pellets during a typical feeding period (150-200 days).

**HOW** are beef cattle given growth hormones?



**The amount of estrogen contained in one serving of cabbage =** the same amount of estrogen contained in over 1,000 servings of beef produced using hormone implants!<sup>6</sup>

	FOOD	ESTROGEN*	SERVINGS OF BEEF** (75g)
	75g Beef without hormone implants	1.1 ng	0.65
	75g Beef with hormone implants	1.9 ng	1
	75g Chicken	2.1 ng	1.1
	355ml Milk	51 ng	26.8
	75g Cabbage	2025 ng	1,065.8

\*AMOUNT OF ESTROGEN (1ng = 1 billionth of a gram)

\*\*EQUIVALENT # OF SERVINGS OF BEEF produced with the use of hormone implants

## “RAISED WITHOUT THE USE OF ADDED HORMONES”

When you see this statement on a package of meat in the grocery store, it means exactly what it says: no growth hormones were used while raising that animal.

In Canada, **ALL CHICKENS** are raised without added hormones. Chicken products labelled “raised without the use of added hormones” are no different from chicken products that do not carry this label.

